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STATE FOR EUR A/S FRIED FROM AMBASSADOR MILOVANOVIC

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [UNGA](#) [MK](#)  
SUBJECT: MACEDONIA: A/S FRIED'S MEETING WITH ADRIATIC  
CHARTER FOREIGN MINISTERS

Classified By: P/E CHIEF SHUBLER, REASONS 1.4(B) & (D).

A CHANCE TO POINT MACEDONIA IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

11. (SBU) Although you will be meeting with the A-3 foreign ministers as a group on the margins of the UNGA in New York on September 22, we believe you can reinforce some key themes we have been underlining with the newly-elected GOM should you have an opportunity for a brief pull-aside with newly-appointed Macedonian FM Antonio Milososki. To strengthen its NATO candidacy, Macedonia needs to:

--show concrete results in efforts to strengthen democratic systems and bolster rule of law, especially on the corruption and TIP fronts;

--redouble efforts to open dialogue with the principal ethnic Albanian opposition party to demonstrate commitment to building an inclusive Macedonia; and,

--keep defense reforms on track, to avoid overstretch in its commitments to overseas peace operations.

12. (U) These themes also were reflected in Ambassador Nuland's March 2006 "NATO Roadshow" visit to Macedonia, which highlighted the country's significant progress in meeting MAP-related requirements and outlined outstanding issues the GOM needed to address to strengthen its NATO membership candidacy.

DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS -- IMPROVING, BUT STILL NEED WORK

13. (SBU) Macedonia's July 5 parliamentary elections were judged by the OSCE and by other international observers to have generally met international standards, with irregularities at some polling stations. A peaceful transition of power took place, culminating in the August 26 parliamentary approval of the new coalition government. Charges have been brought against some of the alleged perpetrators of the voting irregularities, but there have not yet been any prosecutions. The GOM must demonstrate that it is serious about prosecuting those cases and, where warranted, obtaining convictions and appropriate sentences against the perpetrators to deter future voter fraud and malfeasance.

IMPROVING DIALOGUE WITH THE OPPOSITION

¶4. (SBU) Despite the fact that the ethnic Albanian DUI party, a member of the former governing coalition, won the majority of the eAlbanian vote, they were not included in the governing coalition that was confirmed in office on August ¶26. The party that won the most seats, ethnic Macedonian center-right VMRO-DPMNE, engaged in coalition negotiations with DUI but eventually declined to include them in the government.

¶5. (SBU) DUI reacted strongly to its exclusion from government, threatening to return its parliamentary mandates, take to the streets, and suspend cooperation between DUI-dominated municipalities and the central government. DUI leaders also threatened to actively, but democratically, work to bring down the government and prime minister, both of which they consider illegitimate. To avoid signaling to the international community that the government is faced with a continuing low-level political crisis of confidence, the GOM should redouble efforts to open earnest dialogue with DUI to discuss how that party can play a constructive role as an active but loyal opposition.

#### RULE OF LAW -- GOOD LEGISLATIVE ADVANCES, SLOW PRACTICAL PROGRESS

¶6. (SBU) The previous government had a good track record on legislative action related to rule of law, having passed a comprehensive package of judicial reforms in 2005-2006. The new government is focused on passing a new police law to enhance police professionalism, as well as a wiretapping law that will help combat organized crime. The previous government demonstrated some progress on trafficking in

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persons (TIP), with adoption in 2006 of a national strategy for combating TIP and the successful prosecution and conviction of defendants in a major TIP case in August 2006. Two major corruption cases are ongoing, but have not shown much movement over the past several months. The government needs to show concrete progress over the next several months to a year in combating TIP and corruption. It should strive to prosecute to conviction, as warranted, several high-profile corruption cases, and continue to investigate and prosecute major TIP crimes.

#### ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT -- SOME BRIGHT SPOTS

¶7. (SBU) Macedonia has made significant headway on economic reform issues, having completed this year the first phase of the privatization of the country's monopoly electric supply company and having opened earlier this year a "one-stop shop" window for business registration. Partly as a result, the World Bank recently boosted Macedonia's ranking as a country in which to do business to 92nd out of 175 countries in 2006. The government has made accelerating economic growth its top priority, along with fighting corruption, and hopes to use fiscal and agricultural policy, plus tax cuts, to spur growth from 4.5 GDP growth annually to 6-8 percent by the end of its mandate.

#### DEFENSE REFORMS -- CONTINUED STRONG PERFORMANCE

¶8. (SBU) Macedonia is strong on defense reforms, receiving high marks for its progress in restructuring its military in line with NATO standards. In May 2006 the Parliament passed a Defense Law that officially ended conscription; the armed forces are expected to shift to an all-volunteer army by October of this year.

¶9. (SBU) Macedonia currently has troops deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq, including a recent deployment of an 85-man strong company with the SEEBRIG to Kabul under UK leadership. They also have deployed troops and helicopters to support the EUFOR mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The seventh rotation of Macedonian troops to Iraq took place in

June; the next rotation is expected in December. The only major concern in this area of the NATO MAP process is that the GOM should not commit too quickly to additional troop deployments overseas at the cost of its continuing defense reform priorities.

BIO NOTE ON FM ANTONIO MILOSOSKI

¶10. (U) Have served previously as VMRO-DPMNE's chief spokesman and as a key Gruevski adviser, Milososki was the VMRO-DPMNE-led government spokesman from May 2000 to September 2001, a period covering the country's internal armed conflict. Prior to that, he served in the government of former Prime Minister Ljupco Georgievski. After leaving government, Milososki went to Germany, where he earned an M.A. in European Integration studies. He began work in 2002 on a PhD in political science (his dissertation topic is Macedonian-Greek relations) at the University of Duisburg in Germany.

¶11. (SBU/NF) Milososki was known during his earlier student days as a nationalist with hardline, ethnically divisive views opposing Albanian-language instruction at the national university in Skopje. He has moderated those views since then, according to local observers, although he was abrasive during the 2006 election campaign. In addition to founding the "Youth Euro-Atlantic Forum," he has worked as a regular columnist for a prominent local daily newspaper, and participated in an international leadership and economic development seminar sponsored by Harvard University. He also attended a Security Executive Seminar at the Marshall Center for European Studies in Germany in 2000. Born in Tetovo in 1976, Milososki is married to an electrical engineer. He speaks fluent English and German.

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